Undying Memory

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Summary: Duo Maxwell finds himself frustrated by the silent pilot, Heero Yuy. In his anger, he forgets to listen for the unspoken words.

The consequences he faces for his insensitivity are

irreversible.

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Duo Maxwell leaned over Heero's shoulder, peering down at the glowing screen of the laptop. Heero tried his best to ignore the American pilot, but it took a lot of self control not to shove him away. "Whatcha doin'?" Duo said curiously. Heero didn't answer him. Duo sighed and plopped down onto his bed. "Fine." he said begrudgingly. "I never knew a laptop was so interesting that you could ignore your partner." he grumbled under his breath. He reminded himself quickly that this was Heero, and it probably had something to do with a new mission. That seemed to be the only thing he would dedicate full attention to. "I have a new mission." Heero said in his dull monotone voice. "No kidding. What's it about?" Duo was glad that his fellow pilot finally had found the courtesy to answer. "You are not involved." "What?!" he sat up immediately, his long braid snapping forward with the swift motion. "You are not involved." Heero repeated simply. Duo sighed in exasperation. "I heard that," he snapped. "What I meant was why not?" "This is a secret mission" "You seem to be forgetting that I'm a Gundam pilot too! I think I have the right to know exactly what's going on! " his patience had snapped. Not that he really had that much. But who would, with a partner so uncooperative? You practically had to strangle an answer out of the guy! "You are not concerned with this." Heero went back to whatever he was doing on the laptop, which was his way of saying that the conversation was over. Duo knew that it would be no use saying more, but he didn't care anymore. He was so sick of just letting things drop when the Japanese pilot was tired of talking. "I AM concerned with this! I am so tired of you telling me what to do, I don't know why I put up with this kind of stuff. You know, you could at least be a little subtler when you're trying to tell me that you don't trust me. After this long, we should be working together, but we're still acting as much

like strangers as when we first met! " he was yelling now, letting all of the anger and frustration he had held in come out in an explosion of words, most of which he didn't mean. "I never said I didn't trust you." Heero spoke softly, a harsh contrast to the other boy's yelling. The door of the dorm room slammed deafeningly loud, the soft defense had gone unheard. "I don't want you to get hurt." he whispered to the closed door. Quatre came down the hall to see Duo pacing back and fourth with his hands shoved in his pockets, talking to himself hastily. It wasn't hard for him to tell something was wrong. "Duo, you O.K.?" he said quietly, trying not to upset him even more. Duo looked up quickly as though he had been startled out of a trance. "Yeah, fine. It's just that Heeroâ€|" he threw his hands up in frustration. "He won't talk to me at all! It's like he'd rather me just get out of his life completely. I mean, I just wanted to know what the next mission he was on was, and he acted like it was none of my business. We're supposed to be a team!" Quatre stood and listened. He knew that the braided pilot wasn't used to someone not being so talkative. But just the opposite went for Heero. "Heero doesn't know that much about talking to other people. You just have to be patient with him." "I HAVE been patient! All this time I've just been blowing it off, you know? But I'm so sick and tired of him being such a jerk!" he sat down on the dark green couch behind him and gave a defeated sigh. He put his head in his hands as if he had a bad headache. "Maybe there's no hope for him. Maybe I should just leave him alone." "No, Duo, it's good that you're so persistent," Quatre responded gently. "He needs someone like you, someone who won't leave him alone until he gives a little. It's the only way he'll ever be able to be a normal person. You're the only person who can help him come out of his shell." Duo raised his head and smiled hopefully. "Y'really think so?" Quatre returned the smile. "Hai."

A huge mobile suit loomed high above the others, enormous demon wings spreading out to make the mobile suit appear even larger. A glowing green double-edged thermal scythe hacked and sliced through its enemies, lighting up the night sky with the golden glow of multiple explosions and filling the air with the sound of sonic booms, terrified screams and metal being engulfed in balls of fire. The braided pilot laughed manically, throwing his head back as the crows of delight bubbled up from his throat. He became serious suddenly, his eyes holding a predatory glint as he maneuvered the controls with practiced perfection. "Sometimes I think I enjoy this way too much." His voice came out almost as a low growl, but it held the same humor as always. "Out of my way, Oz trash! MAKE WAY FOR SHINIGAMI!" he yelled, slicing through more mobile suits. "This is just too easy. Some of them aren't even fighting back! I guess they realized that you just can't win over death because it'll catch up with you eventually." Duo was trying hard to distract himself from the pang of guilt that stabbed at the pit of his stomach. He was still so mad at Heero that he hadn't even told him about this mission. He figured that if Heero could do that, so could he. For a brief moment, the American pilot wondered if Heero would worry about him. I seriously doubt that. He thought bitterly. He probably thinks I'd just as soon be dead. He doesn't care about anyone but himself. Duo sliced through a mobile suit that had just been standing at the front lines, not even bothering to make any kind of defense. This fight seemed totally pointless, and it wasn't fulfilling the need for aggression and challenge he had acquired by becoming a Gundam pilot.

Duo came home pretty early, and he was as cheerful as always. "Ne, Wu-man! Whatcha doin'?" he asked to the Chinese boy who was sure he

had finally found a peaceful spot to restâ€|.until Duo came back. No one was safe from that braided baka. "I'm trying to read. It's slightly difficult when you are staring over my shoulder and distracting me, Maxwell." he growled. "Geez, sorry. Just asking." he said defensively. "Where's Heero?" "Not home yet." Wufei refused to look up. "Where'd he go?" "Mission." "Did he take anyone with him?" "No." Duo frowned. "Are you sure?" "Yes." "Positive?" "AARGH!"

Two days. Two days and Heero was still not back. Duo had worried himself nearly sick. He lay awake in bed, unable to sleep. Something's wrong. I can't just keep waiting like this. I have to do something! Duo sighed and got up from bed. He went to the window and pulled back the curtain, hoping that the Japanese boy would just come walking up. But there's nothing I *can* do. Nothing except just hope that it's all right. Heero can take care of himself. An entire week and no sign of him. Duo couldn't wait any longer. He had to get answers, or he would be waiting forever. Duo walked cautiously up to Heero's sacred laptop. He had never touched it before, but he was getting desperate. He could tell the other boys were a little concerned about the first pilot being missing, but they all thought he would come back in his own due time. Instinct told Duo that, although he wanted to believe them, they were wrong. Ok, so how does this thing work? After about an hour of a frustrated battle with the computer, Duo was busily hacking through OZ files. Now this, I can do. While he was zipping through them all, a certain one caught his eye. It was a log of the people who had died in the most recent battle, which meant they were all his own victims. He scanned through the names, curious to see just how much damage he had done. There were even more people than he imagined. Then he saw a name he recognized. Heero Yuy. No…. Duo's throat was suddenly dry. He managed to just barely call out the names of the other pilots, who came quickly. "Yes, Duo?" said Quatre as he casually stepped inside. He took one look at the American and frowned, his face showing concern. "What's wrong?? I've never seen you looking so pale." Duo didn't answer. He just stared at the screen unbelievingly, his eyes glazing over as if he couldn't focus them and was seeing something no else could. "Duo?!" the blonde pilot was getting scared now, this wasn't the Duo Maxwell he knew at all. Trowa calmly walked over to the braided bishounen and looked at the computer screen. His air of composure quickly dissipated as he saw the list of names. "My Godâ€|" The other two boys quickly crowded around, each of them looking shocked and unbelieving at what it said. "Duoâ€| whispered Ouatre, feeling the pain that seemed to emanate from him. Suddenly, in the American boy's mind, he saw a flashback. A mobile suit on the front lines, refusing to fight back. He had taken out all his anger on that hapless suit and blown it to pieces. Somehow, he knew. He knew who the pilot had been. "I killed him, Quatre. I killed him. And he wanted me to. I killed the best friend I ever had. I guess that when I said I was Shinigami, I didn't know how right I was. "The other Gundam pilots stayed silent. In the dark afternoon light, they knew there was nothing any of them could say.

End file.